

R 252245Z NOV 98  
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2485  
INFO SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PRETORIA 015505

LONDON FOR PFLAUMMER, PARIS FOR WILLIAMS  
DEPT FOR AF, P, E

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/23/03  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [SADC](#) [SF](#)  
SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICA'S LONG-TERM SADC APPROACH

REF: STATE 136499

(U) CLASSIFIED BY POLCOUNS REED FENDRICK. REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. IN A NOVEMBER 23 MEETING WITH DFA DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR SADC POLITICAL AFFAIRS HORST BRAMMER, AND DFA DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR REGIONAL COORDINATION COEN BEZUIDENHOUT, THE SAG OFFICIALS TOLD POLMIL OFFICER AND POLOFFICER THAT, WHILE SOUTH AFRICA SUPPORTED THE STRENGTHENING OF SADC AS AN INSTITUTION, IT HAD ADOPTED A LONG-TERM APPROACH TO THE ORGANIZATION'S REFORM. ACCORDING TO BRAMMER AND BEZUIDENHOUT, THE RESTRUCTURING OF SADC'S SECTORS HAD BEEN POSTPONED, AS HAD THE RESOLUTION OF THE SPLIT BETWEEN THE CHAIR AND THE ORGAN ON POLITICS, SECURITY, AND DEFENSE. ALTHOUGH BOTH WERE HOPEFUL THAT SADC AS A WHOLE WOULD GROW STRONGER WITH TIME, THEY NOTED THAT CURRENT EVENTS, SUCH AS THE DROC CONFLICT AND LESOTHO, COUPLED WITH A RELUCTANCE OF MEMBER STATES TO COMMIT THEMSELVES TO A SADC OVERHAUL, HAVE PUT REFORM ON THE BACKBURNER UNTIL AT LEAST AFTER THE CHAIRMANSHIP TURNOVER IN 1999, FOR WHICH SOUTH AFRICA HAS ALREADY BEGUN QUIETLY PROMOTING MOZAMBIQUE, THE CURRENT DEPUTY CHAIR. BOTH BRAMMER AND BEZUIDENHOUT INDICATED THAT THE UPCOMING U.S.-SADC FORUM COULD BE A GOOD PLACE TO ADDRESS SOME OF THESE CONCERNS, AND WE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF SOUTH AFRICAN INPUT ON POTENTIAL FORUM AGENDA ITEMS (REFTEL). END SUMMARY.

REFORM AND RESOLUTION SIDELINED...FOR THE MOMENT  
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¶2. (C) STRESSING THAT PROSPECTS FOR SADC SECTORAL REFORM ARE CURRENTLY "NOT GOING ANYWHERE", BEZUIDENHOUT ADDED THAT THE EU HAD ACCORDINGLY BEEN QUITE DISAPPOINTED DURING THE RECENT EU-SADC CONSULTATIONS IN VIENNA, AND THAT THERE WERE NO PLANS TO MOVE AHEAD ON THE EU-FUNDED REFORM PROPOSAL. ACCORDING TO BRAMMER AND BEZUIDENHOUT, THE SECTORAL REFORM ISSUE HAD MET STRONG RESISTANCE MOST SIGNIFICANTLY FROM SMALLER SADC MEMBERS SUCH AS SWAZILAND, LESOTHO, AND MALAWI, WHO ARE WORRIED THAT ANY REFORM (AND "SURRENDER" OF CURRENT SECTORS) WOULD PERMANENTLY SIDELINE THEM WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION. BRAMMER ALSO INDICATED THAT SOME OF THE "NORTHERN" SADC MEMBERS, SUCH AS ZAMBIA, TANZANIA, AND ANGOLA, WERE ALSO DETERMINED TO HOLD ON TO THEIR PORTFOLIOS. ON A POSITIVE NOTE, HOWEVER, BRAMMER SAID THAT THE ECONOMICALLY STRONGER COUNTRIES, SUCH AS BOTSWANA, NAMIBIA, MOZAMBIQUE, AND EVEN TO SOME EXTENT ZIMBABWE, WERE MORE OR LESS ALIGNED WITH SOUTH AFRICA ON THIS ISSUE AND SAW THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERTAKING SOME SORT OF STRUCTURAL REFORM AKIN TO THAT RECOMMENDED IN THE PROPOSAL.

¶3. (C) THAT SAID, BEZUIDENHOUT EMPHASIZED THAT BOTH THE CONFLICT IN THE DROC AND LESOTHO HAD DOMINATED THE EU-SADC CONSULTATIONS, AT THE EXPENSE OF INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES SUCH AS STRUCTURAL REFORM. HE DID ADD, HOWEVER, THAT AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING HAD BEEN AGREED UPON, AND THAT, FOR THE FIRST TIME, SMALL ARMS PROLIFERATION WOULD BE INCLUDED.

¶4. (C) BOTH BRAMMER AND BEZUIDENHOUT APPEARED RESIGNED TO THE FACT THAT RESOLUTION OF DIFFERENCES OVER THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SADC CHAIR (PRESIDENT MANDELA) AND CHAIR OF THE ORGAN ON POLITICS, SECURITY, AND DEFENSE (PRESIDENT MUGABE) WOULD SIMPLY HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL AT LEAST 1999, WHEN MANDELA'S CHAIRMANSHIP ENDS. MANDELA, THEY SAID, HAD DEFINITELY REACHED THIS CONCLUSION. BRAMMER SAID THAT THE MULTI-COUNTRY (MALAWI, MOZAMBIQUE, AND NAMIBIA) REPORT ON THE ORGAN ISSUE HAD NOT YET BEEN FORMALLY

PRESENTED TO SADC (THE SAG HAD HOPED IT WOULD BE PRESENTED DURING THE MAURITIUS SUMMIT), AND WOULD MOST LIKELY REMAIN SHELVED. INDEED, THE DFA OFFICIALS ALMOST APPEARED RELIEVED THAT MANDELA WOULD NOT HAVE TO FOCUS FURTHER ON THE ISSUE, AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT HIS SUCCESSOR (THE SAG IS ALREADY QUIETLY PROMOTING THE DEPUTY CHAIR, CHISSANO OF MOZAMBIQUE) WOULD BE ABLE TO MOVE THE ISSUE FORWARD. HOWEVER, BRAMMER STRESSED THAT WHILE THE CONFLICT CONTINUES IN THE DROC, MUGABE WOULD NOT BE INTERESTED IN ANY RESOLUTION.

#### CONTINUITY IN LIGHT OF DROC MISTAKE

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15. (C) RATHER SHEEPISHLY ADMITTING THAT SOUTH AFRICA NOW REGRETTED HAVING SUPPORTED DROC'S INCLUSION AS A SADC MEMBER, BRAMMER SAID THAT, THE CONFLICT ASIDE, HAVING DROC AS A MEMBER HAD UNPLEASANTLY STRETCHED THE GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES OF SADC. AS BRAMMER EXPLAINED, ONLY SOUTHERN DROC (MAYBE) HAD A CULTURAL OR ECONOMIC AFFILIATION WITH THE REST OF SADC, AND BY ADMITTING DROC, SADC HAD ALLOWED ITSELF TO BE PULLED INTO AN ESSENTIALLY CENTRAL AFRICAN CONFLICT. BRAMMER THEN NOTED THAT TO ALLOW FOR THE DROC'S SPEEDY ENTRY INTO SADC, PROCEDURAL RULES HAD BEEN BENT, WHICH IN RETROSPECT, ONLY SERVED TO FURTHER EXACERBATE INTERNAL DIVISIONS. IN LIGHT OF THAT DECISION, BRAMMER AND BEZUIDENHOUT BOTH STRESSED THAT THE SAG WOULD LIKE TO SEE A COMMITTED CHAIR, SUCH AS MOZAMBIQUE, SELECTED IN 1999, ONE THAT WOULD PLACE EMPHASIS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUITY IN ADMINISTRATIVE AND POLICY DECISIONS. THEY ALSO COMPLEMENTED MOZAMBIQUE'S FOREIGN POLICY APPARATUS FOR

16. (C) BOTH OFFICIALS INDICATED THAT THE SAG WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO THE UPCOMING U.S.-SADC FORUM AS A POSSIBLE MEANS TO MOVE FORWARD ON SOME ISSUES. BOTH WELCOMED OUR REQUEST FOR INPUT ON POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS OR AREAS OF CONCERN (REFTEL), BUT NOTED THAT THE DROC WAS CONSUMING MUCH OF SADC'S ATTENTION.

#### COMMENT

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17. (C) IT APPEARS THAT THE SAG HAS RESIGNED ITSELF TO THE FACT THAT NO SIGNIFICANT SADC INSTITUTIONAL OR STRUCTURAL REFORM WILL TAKE PLACE DURING THE REST OF MANDELA'S CHAIRMANSHP, WHICH INCLUDES THE FEBRUARY MINISTERIAL IN LUSAKA AND THE SEPTEMBER 1999 SUMMIT IN MAPUTO. THAT SAID, BOTH BRAMMER AND BEZUIDENHOUT INDICATED THAT THE SAG REMAINS COMMITTED TO SADC AS AN INSTITUTION IN THE LONG TERM, AND THAT THE SAG WILL CONTINUE TO WORK FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF SADC AS A REGIONAL BODY, ESPECIALLY ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT. GIVEN THE EVER-STRENGTHENING TIES BETWEEN MOZAMBIQUE AND SOUTH AFRICA, THE SAG CLEARLY HOPES THAT A MOZAMBIQUEAN CHAIR WOULD GENERALLY SUPPORT SOUTH AFRICA'S SADC VISION. ALTHOUGH THE SAG WOULD THEREFORE LIKE TO SEE CHISSANO REPLACE MANDELA, IT SEEMS THAT THE ISSUE IS AN OPEN ONE, AND COULD TAKE THE NEXT CHAIRMAN AS COMPLETELY BY SURPRISE AS MANDELA WAS TAKEN IN MASERU IN 1996. TO THAT END, SOUTH AFRICA CLEARLY REALIZES THAT SADC IS A LONG TERM INVESTMENT - LITERALLY AND FIGURATIVELY.

JOSEPH